



Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Annual and Five-Year Plan
Fiscal Years 2010-2014

AMENDED 3/15/10
RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD (RAB) RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FY 2010-2014 FIVE YEAR PLAN

March 2010 Amended Annual and 5-Year Plan: Resident Advisory Board Comments on ARRA Amendment to the 2009 HPHA Plan

At the March 8, 2010 RAB meeting HPHA staff presented the RAB with the narrative explanation and the revised HUD 50075.1 ARRA pages. The members of RAB present at the meeting agreed with the need to amend the PHA Plan, and support the proposed amendment.

Original 2009 Submission of RAB Recommendations:

The RAB reviewed the Five-Year Plan and supports the proposed goals and objectives.

Annual Plan

1. Housing Needs

- The RAB has reviewed Component 1; Housing Needs and has no comments at this time to this section of the PHA Plan

2. Financial Resources

- The RAB supports HPHA's proposed late fees charged to residents for late payment on their rent and also fees for bounced checks that are written with the condition that those fees be assessed after the grace period is over and not after the due date. The RAB feels that tenants should be held accountable for payment of their rent on time but the grace period should not be taken away from them in paying their rent.

HPHA Response: HPHA feels that rent should be paid on time and any payment made after the date agreed to on the lease agreement is considered late. As a result the late fee should be assessed right after the 1st of the month.

3. Polices on Eligibility, Selection and Admissions

- The RAB supports HPHA's proposed changes of adding the working families as a preference for entrance into public housing, but the RAB strongly feels that before any new applications are accepted, a new list should be generated using the current applicants currently on the waitlist who fall into the working families



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category. The RAB strongly feels that there needs to be a balance between the preference on the waitlist.

HPHA Response: HPHA is not intending to replace the homeless as a preference. Working families are being added to the preference list in an effort to generate income for the AMP. Among the preferences, applicants will still be put on the waitlist according to time and date.

- The RAB recommends that HPHA monitor applicants more closely. Previous residents of public housing, who owe a back balance to HPHA, should not be allowed to fill out an application for housing until their outstanding balance is paid off.

HPHA Response: The HPHA Applications section accepts ALL applications. Screening of all applications is done by the application unit and denial letters are sent to the applicants who do not qualify due to a balance owing. The outstanding balance will need to be taken care of BEFORE the applicant is put on the waiting list.

4. Rent Determination Policies

- The RAB supports the HPHA proposed change to raising the minimum rent from \$0 to \$50.00, but a monitoring system needs to be implemented by HPHA to ensure that residents who are able to work are actively seeking employment.

HPHA Response: HPHA supports RAB recommendation to raise the minimum rent to \$50.00. This will allow AMP's to receive added revenue.

- The RAB recommends that HPHA implement a standard policy on calculating changes in rent on a timely basis without penalizing the tenant for their hardship. Upon discovery of an error in rent calculation made by HPHA, where the rent was determined to be higher, the tenant should not be retroactively charged. The tenant should only be charged from the time the error was discovered and the tenant should not be faced with eviction for non-payment or delinquency of rent. Upon discovery of an error in rent calculation made by HPHA where the rent was determined to be lower, the tenant should have the option of receiving a lump sum or credit towards monthly rent of the amount owed to the tenant.
- The RAB recommends that interim rents should be done in a timely basis to prevent residents from being penalized should there be an increase in rent.
- **HPHA response: HPHA is currently calculating rent in a timely manner, however, IF there is a delay in receiving salary or employment verification from the employers, this will delay interim rents from being determined for the resident. In the case of re-examinations being done, HPHA starts the re-exam process 3 months prior to the resident's re-exam date. If there is a miscalculation of rent, due to a mistake from management, the tenant is not liable for additional rent owed.**

5. Operations and Management Policies



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- The RAB recommends that HPHA do a better job of monitoring management to ensure that general maintenance of the projects is maintained in a timely manner. As an example, lights that are not working in the parking lots haven't been fixed due to lack of manpower or that the truck isn't available. The RAB feels that excuses are being given for maintenance to the projects not being done.
- The HPHA must implement a system to ensure that repairs to units are being done and completed in a timely manner. The RAB recommends that HPHA implement a system to monitor the quality and timeliness of the work.

HPHA Response: There is a current system in place by HPHA to monitor the general maintenance and work orders at the AMP's.

- With the starting of asset management, the RAB recommends that HPHA should create a report card for each project, which should be available to all residents. The report card should clearly show areas where management is deficient in and area where management is doing well.

HPHA Response: HPHA Administration supports the evaluation of the managers on a consistent basis. State Public Housing Managers (SPHM's) have scheduled meetings with the SPHM's in HPHA's efforts to continuously monitor the AMP's overall work performance.

- The RAB recommends hiring residents to serve as on-site managers to deal with on-site situations. The RAB feels that these on-site managers should be a priority in elderly projects but eventually should be branched to all projects. The RAB recommends that on-site managers be a program that is started at ALL public housing projects rather than just being a pilot project for one or two projects.

HPHA Response: HPHA is in the process of implementing the tenant monitor program. HPHA feels that the initial implementation of the program must be started only at ONE property. This will allow HPHA to effectively evaluate the program and see what the financial cost will be to run the program.

- The RAB recommends that utility allowance checks be mailed directly to the utility company, which will prevent people from "double-dipping" and going to non-profits for payments for utilities.

Response: HPHA realizes that the utility check being sent to residents is being used for other purposes. HPHA is in full support of this recommendation although it may take some time to set this system up with the utility companies.

6. Grievance Procedures

- The RAB continues to strongly recommend that the lease agreement and other important documents such as the grievance procedures be



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translated into different languages (written form). Having important documents translated will help to ensure that all residents understand their rights, rules, and responsibilities.

- **HPHA Response: HPHA agrees with this recommendation and will work on getting ALL important documents translated for the benefit of the residents. .**

7. Capital Improvement Needs

- The RAB recommends that HPHA monitor more closely contractors who are hired to do capital improvements. Monitoring should be done to prohibit contractors from using shoddy materials and to ensure that projects are completed on time and on budget.

HPHA response: The procurement and bid process includes building and material specifications that are required for the job being bid on. Throughout the contract, HPHA continuously monitors the contractor's quality of work done by the contractors.

8. Demolition and Disposition

- The RAB recommends that HPHA put more thought to which building(s) they will be demolishing. The RAB feels that HPHA has made decisions in the past to demolish units in specific projects, but have later changed their minds. As a result, HPHA has wasted time waiting for HUD approval to “de-demolish” before they can move forward to renovate the units. (Kalihi Valley Homes and Lanakila Homes)

HPHA Response: HPHA continuously evaluates our housing priorities.

With a long waiting list of applicants waiting to move into public housing, some decisions to demolish units had to be reversed.

9. Designation of Housing

- The RAB recommends that HPHA continue to study the problems that arise from the elderly living in the same community with the young disabled residents. There is a growing concern from the RAB and residents statewide about putting the young disabled in the same community as the elderly. RAB suggest that



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HPHA look into the possibility of placing the young disabled in a different property from the elderly residents, which will alleviate a lot of problems.
HPHA Response: HPHA realizes that there are a lot of problems due to the young handicapped being placed in elderly housing. HPHA is looking into the possibility of designating certain projects to house elderly residents.

- The RAB recommends that as a condition of accepting a unit in public housing, applicants who receive mental health services, shall provide the appropriate assessment certifying that they do not pose a safety risk to their community and are able to live with minimal assistance from outside services. Currently, residents, who require substantial mental health services, have jeopardized the safety and security of others living in the project by displaying violent and intimidating behavior.

HPHA Response: HPHA will continue to comply with rules of fair housing, including providing housing for people with disabilities.

- The RAB recommends that HPHA do a better job of monitoring elderly projects to ensure that all residents meets the requirement of being 62 years of age. There seems to be residents living in elderly public housing, which do not fit the criteria of living in that specific elderly housing.

HPHA Response: HPHA Application unit continues to ensure that applicants to public housing who are elderly or disabled meet the designated requirements for them to enter public housing.

10. Conversion of Public Housing

- The RAB has reviewed Component 10; Conversion of Public Housing and has no comment at this time to this section of the PHA Plan.

11.Homeownership

- The RAB reviewed Component 11, Home Ownership and has no comment at this time to their section of the PHA Plan.

12. Community Service Programs

- The RAB strongly recommends and supports training and implementation of resident management corporations to further enhance resident self-sufficiency. HPHA must work with projects that express interest in forming and operating resident management corporations, as strongly encouraged by HUD's CFR vol. 4 part 964.

HPHA Response: HPHA feels that the implementation of management corporations should not be dependent on the housing authority but feels that the



responsibility of starting up a management corporation should lie with the residents.

13. Crime and Safety

- The RAB recommends that security programs not only be focused on certain projects. The RAB understands that there are different safety issues at each project, but HPHA should also add some form of a security program at all projects.

HPHA Response: Due to the lack of funding, HPHA is not able to place security programs at every housing site. Without on-site security, HPHA management has great difficulty enforcing the housing rules. HPHA, under the coordination of Mr. Cliff Laboy is in the process of developing a program in partnership with the Honolulu Police Department that would enable HPHA to get information on incidents happening at unsecured properties. The program will be called the HPHA's incident report card program. The implementation of this program is still in progress but the information gathered will then allow HPHA to enforce our house rules and evict any residents that don't follow our house rules.

- The RAB recommends that projects be evaluated for areas that may be detrimental and may cause a problem with crime and safety. The RAB strongly feels that HPHA has not followed through in the installation of adequate lighting and removing all physical barriers at all projects to improve the overall security at the projects.

HPHA Response: HPHA has started "environmental design strategies" at Kamehameha Homes, Makamae Homes and Punchbowl Homes by cutting back shrubs and bushes and other heavily vegetated areas. This has created a better environment and improved visibility for security personnel. HPHA through coordination of Mr. Cliff Laboy, is trying to fund volunteer groups that could help with performing the physical labor needed to cut down the vegetation. HPHA's installation of adequate lighting at the projects is being affected by funding.

- The RAB recommends that HPHA provide proper training to all associations interested in starting a community patrol/security watches. Without proper training, community patrol/security watches will not be effective in their community.

HPHA Response: HPHA agrees with this recommendation. The Honolulu Police Department is available to conduct training to any group interested in doing a community patrol/security watch at their project.



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- The RAB recommends hiring residents to serve as on-site managers to deal with on-site situations to deal all sites but priority given to elderly projects. The RAB recommends that on-site managers be started at ALL public housing rather than just being a pilot project for one or two projects.

HPHA Response: HPHA is in the process of implementing the tenant monitor program. HPHA feels that the initial implementation of the program must be started only at ONE property. This will allow HPHA to effectively evaluate the program and see what the financial cost will be to run the program.

14. Pet Policy

- The RAB recommends that HPHA be consistent in the enforcement of pet policy rules and guidelines. There are many residents that should be referred to evictions due to the breaking of the pet policy. In addition, the size of the animal may be a safety issue on the property, which may lead to pending lawsuits by residents should someone get hurt.

HPHA response: HPHA will continue to work with all AMP's to consistently enforce the rules and guidelines of the pet policy statewide.

15. Civil Rights Certifications (included with PHA Plan Certifications)

- The RAB reviewed Component 15, Civil Rights Certification and has no comment at this time to their section of the PHA Plan.

16. Audit

- The RAB reviewed Component 16, Financial Audit and has no comment at this time to their section of the PHA Plan.

17. Asset Management

- The RAB reviewed Component 17, Asset Management and has no comment at this time to their section of the PHA Plan.

18. Other Information

- The RAB reviewed Component 18, Other Information and has no comment at this time to their section of the PHA Plan.

19. Definition of "Substantial Deviation" and "Significant Amendment Or Modification"

- The RAB reviewed the definition of substantial deviation and significant amendment or modification and has no comment at this time to this section of



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PHA Plan.

20. Additional Comments

- The RAB strongly feels that in order to make comments and/or recommendations to HPHA's proposed changes, the PMMSB Chief or designated representative must be available to attend all RAB meetings so that RAB members can ask questions first hand as to what the changes are and who it will involve. RAB members will then have a better understanding of what those changes are and can communicate them to the residents in their geographic area.

HPHA Response: HPHA will continue to have appropriate staff attend meetings